

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A disposable servingware container comprising:

a generally planar bottom portion;

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a first annular transition portion extending upwardly and outwardly from the generally planar bottom portion;

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an optional sidewall portion extending upwardly and outwardly from the first annular transition portion;

a second annular transition portion flaring outwardly with respect to the first annular transition portion;

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an outer flange portion extending outwardly with respect to the second annular transition portion defining generally the container perimeter having a characteristic diameter; and

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at least first and second generally planar peripheral tabs extending outwardly from the flange portion of the container generally beyond the container perimeter, the peripheral tabs being configured so as to define a first cross-tab dimension between their outer edges generally parallel to and of like extent with a corresponding transverse dimension across the perimeter of the container.

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2. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 1, wherein said first and second tabs extend outwardly from the perimeter of the container a distance of from about 0.02 to about 0.3 times the characteristic diameter.

3. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 2, wherein said first and second tabs extend outwardly from the perimeter of the container a distance of from about 0.1 to about 0.3 times the characteristic diameter.
- 5 4. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 1, having a generally round shape such that the container perimeter is a circle having a diameter, **D**, and wherein the first cross-tab dimension defined by the first and second peripheral tabs is generally equal in length to the diameter, **D**.
- 10 5. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 4, wherein the ratio of the height of the container to the characteristic diameter thereof is from about 0.05 to about 0.3.
- 15 6. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 5, wherein said generally planar bottom portion is provided with a plurality of upwardly projecting ribs which divide the container into a plurality of serving sections, and the ribs project upwardly from the bottom portion at most about 0.75 times the height of the container.
- 20 7. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 6, wherein said ribs project upwardly from the bottom portion at most about 0.6 times the height of the container.
- 25 8. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 5, wherein there are provided at least 2 upwardly projecting ribs which divide the container at least 2 serving sections, one of which areas occupies at least about 60 percent of the bottom portion of the container.
- 30 9. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 8, wherein there are provided 3 upwardly projecting ribs which divide the container into 3

serving sections, one of which areas occupies at least about 60 percent of the bottom portion of the container.

10. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 4, wherein said  
5 first and second tabs extend outwardly from the perimeter of the container a  
distance of from about 0.02 to about 0.3 times the characteristic diameter.
11. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 10, wherein said  
10 first and second tabs extend outwardly from the perimeter of the container a  
distance of from about 0.1 to about 0.3 times the diameter, **D**, of the  
container.
12. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 11, wherein said  
15 first and second tabs extend outwardly from the perimeter of the container at  
least a distance of about 0.15 times the diameter, **D**, of the container.
13. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 1, wherein the  
outer flange portion of the container comprises an arcuate outer flange  
portion with a convex upper surface, the radius of curvature of the arcuate  
20 outer flange portion being between about 0.0175 and about 0.1 times the  
characteristic diameter of the container.
14. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 13, further  
characterized by a flange outer vertical drop wherein the ratio of the flange  
25 outer vertical drop to the characteristic diameter of the container is greater  
than about 0.01.
15. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 1, further  
comprising at least a third peripheral tab.

16. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 15, further comprising at least a fourth peripheral tab.
17. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 16, having a generally round shape such that the container perimeter is a circle having a diameter, **D**, and the first cross-tab dimension defined by the first and second peripheral tabs is generally equal in length to the diameter, **D**, and wherein the third and fourth peripheral tabs are generally planar and extend outwardly from the flange portion of the container and are configured to define a second cross-tab dimension between their outer edges generally parallel to and of like extent with the first cross-tab dimension defined by the first and second peripheral tabs.
18. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 17, wherein at least one of the tabs is provided with a printed image.
19. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 18, wherein at least two peripheral tabs are provided with a printed image.
20. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 1, wherein said first and second peripheral tabs have an arcuate outer edge.
21. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 20, wherein the outer edges of the first and second peripheral tabs have a radius of curvature of from about 0.01 to about 0.4 times the characteristic diameter of the container.
22. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 21, wherein the outer edges of the first and second peripheral tabs have a radius of curvature of from about 0.05 to about 0.35 times the characteristic diameter of the container.

23. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 20, wherein the outer edges of the first and second peripheral tabs have a radius of curvature of from about 0.1 to about 0.35 times the characteristic diameter of the container.

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24. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 23, wherein the peripheral tabs have a radius of curvature of from about 0.15 to about 0.35 times the characteristic diameter of the container.

10 25. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 1, wherein the peripheral tabs define an included angle therebetween of less than about 150°.

15 26. The disposable servingware according to Claim 25, wherein the peripheral tabs define an included angle therebetween of less than about 120°.

27. The disposable servingware according to Claim 26, wherein the peripheral tabs define an included angle between of from about 70° and 90°.

20 28. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 1, formed of paper.

29. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 28, press-formed from a paperboard blank.

25 30. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 29, wherein at least one surface of said paperboard blank is provided with a substantially liquid-impervious coating comprising an inorganic pigment or filler and a water-based, press applied overcoat.

31. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 30, wherein at least one surface of said paperboard blank is provided with a styrene-butadiene polymer coating.
- 5 32. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 30, wherein styrene-butadiene polymer is a carboxylated styrene-butadiene polymer.
33. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 1, formed of a thermoplastic composition.
- 10 34. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 33, fabricated from a thermoplastic material by way of a technique selected from the group consisting of injection molding, injection blow molding, injection stretch molding and composite injection molding.
- 15 35. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 33, formed from a foamed polymeric material.
36. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 33, formed from sheet stock of thermoplastic material.
- 20 37. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 33, thermoformed, thermoformed by the application of vacuum or thermoformed by a combination of vacuum and pressure.
- 25 38. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 33, thermoformed by the application of vacuum.
39. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 33, wherein said thermoplastic composition is a foamed or solid polymeric material selected from the group consisting of: polyamides, polyacrylates, polysulfones,

polyetherketones, polycarbonates, acrylics, polyphenylene sulfides, acetals, cellulosic polymers, polyetherimides, polyphenylene ethers or oxides, styrene-maleic anhydride copolymers, styrene-acrylonitrile copolymers, polyvinylchlorides and mixtures thereof.

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40. The disposable servingware container of Claim 33, wherein said thermoplastic composition comprises a foamed or solid polymeric material selected from the group consisting of: polyesters, polystyrenes, polypropylenes, polyethylenes and mixtures thereof.

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41. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 40, thermoformed from mineral-filled polypropylene sheet stock.

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42. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 41, wherein said mineral filler is predominantly mica.

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43. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 41, having a wall thickness from about 10 to about 80 mils and consisting essentially of from about 40 to about 90 percent by weight of a polypropylene polymer, from about 10 to about 60 percent by weight of a mineral filler, from about 1 to about 15 percent by weight polyethylene, up to about 5 weight percent titanium dioxide and optionally including a basic organic or basic inorganic compound comprising the reaction product of an alkali metal or alkaline earth element with carbonates, phosphates, carboxylic acids as well as alkali metal and alkaline earth element oxides, hydroxides, or silicates and basic metal oxides, including mixtures of silicon dioxide with one or more of the following oxides: magnesium oxide, calcium oxide, barium oxide, and mixtures thereof.

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44. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 33, having a wall caliper of from about 10 to about 50 mils.

45. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 44, having a wall caliper of from about 15 to about 25 mils.

5 46. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 33, formed of a styrene polymer composition.

10 47. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 46, formed of polystyrene.

15 48. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 33, formed from a mineral-filled thermoplastic composition.

49. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 1, wherein said first and second generally planar peripheral tabs extend outwardly in a direction generally parallel to the generally planar bottom portion of the container.

20 50. A disposable servingware container press-formed from a generally planar paperboard blank comprising:  
a generally planar bottom portion;  
a first annular transition portion extending upwardly and outwardly from the generally planar bottom portion;  
25 an optional sidewall portion extending upwardly and outwardly from the first annular transition portion;  
a second annular transition portion flaring outwardly with respect to the first annular transition portion;

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an outer flange portion extending outwardly with respect to the second annular transition portion defining a container perimeter having a characteristic diameter, **D**; and

5           at least first and second generally planar peripheral tabs extending outwardly from the flange portion of the container generally beyond the container perimeter, the peripheral tabs being configured so as to define a cross-tab dimension between their outer edges of generally parallel to and of like extent with a corresponding transverse dimension across the perimeter of

10           the container.

15           51. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 50, wherein the portions of the paperboard blank corresponding to the first and second peripheral tabs of the container are unscored.

20           52. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 50, wherein at least one of the second annular transition portion, or the outer flange portion is provided with a plurality of circumferentially spaced, radially extending regions formed from a plurality of paperboard lamellae rebonded into substantially integrated fibrous structures generally inseparable into their constituent lamellae.

25           53. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 52, prepared from a radially scored paperboard blank wherein the rebonded integrated fibrous structures extend over a profile distance corresponding to at least a portion of the length of the scores of the paperboard blank from which the container is formed.

30           54. The disposable food container according to Claim 52, wherein the plurality of circumferentially spaced, radially extending regions formed from a plurality of paperboard lamellae rebonded into substantially integrated fibrous

structures generally inseparable into their constituent lamellae extend around an annular region corresponding to at least part of the profile of the sidewall portion of the container.

- 5 55. The disposable food container according to Claim 52, wherein the plurality of circumferentially spaced, radially extending regions formed from a plurality of paperboard lamellae rebonded into substantially integrated fibrous structures generally inseparable into their constituent lamellae extend around an annular region corresponding to at least part of the profile of the second 10 annular transition portion of the container.
56. The disposable food container according to Claim 52, wherein the plurality of circumferentially spaced, radially extending regions formed from a plurality of paperboard lamellae rebonded into substantially integrated fibrous structures generally inseparable into their constituent lamellae extend around an annular region corresponding to at least part of the profile of the outer 15 flange portion of the container.
57. The disposable food container according to Claim 52, wherein the optional 20 sidewall portion is present and wherein the sidewall portion, the second annular transition portion and the outer flange portion all include a plurality of circumferentially spaced, radially extending regions formed from a plurality of paperboard lamellae rebonded into substantially integrated fibrous structures generally inseparable into their constituent lamellae 25 extending around an annular region corresponding to at least a part of the respective profile of the sidewall portion, the second annular transition portion and the arcuate outer flange portion.
58. The disposable food container according to Claim 52, having a plurality of 30 circumferentially spaced, radially extending pleats disposed in an annular arrangement which pleats include a substantially integrated fibrous structure

formed from a plurality of rebonded paperboard lamellae generally extending over the length of the pleat.

59. The disposable food container according to Claim 52, provided with a plurality of circumferentially spaced, radially extending pleats the majority of which include a substantially integrated fibrous structure formed from a plurality of rebonded paperboard lamellae extending over at least a portion of their length.
- 10 60. The disposable food container according to Claim 59, wherein the plurality of substantially integrated fibrous structures formed from rebonded paperboard define an annular rebonded paperboard array extending radially in an annular region corresponding to at least a part of the profile of the optional sidewall portion, if present, the second annular transition portion or the outer arcuate flange portion.
- 15 61. The disposable food container according to Claim 52, wherein said circumferentially spaced, radially extending regions formed from a plurality of paperboard lamellae rebonded into substantially integrated fibrous structures generally inseparable into their constituent layers are of generally the same thickness as adjacent areas of the food container.
- 20 62. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 50, having a caliper of at least about 10 mils.
- 25 63. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 62, having a caliper of at least about 12 mils.
- 30 64. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 63, having a caliper of at least about 15 mils and being provided with a coating comprising a clay filler.

65. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 64, having a caliper of from about 10 to about 25 mils.
66. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 65, having a caliper of from about 12 to about 22.5 mils.
67. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 50, wherein said first and second generally planar peripheral tabs extend outwardly in a direction generally parallel to the generally planar bottom portion of the container.
68. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 50, having a generally round shape such that the container perimeter is a circle having a diameter,  $D$ , and wherein the cross-tab dimension defined by the first and second peripheral tabs is generally equal in length to the diameter,  $D$ .
69. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 68, wherein the ratio of the height of the container to diameter,  $D$ , is from about 0.05 to about 0.3 and wherein said generally planar bottom portion is provided with a plurality of upwardly projecting ribs which divide the container into a plurality of serving sections.
70. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 69, wherein said ribs project upwardly from the bottom portion at most about 0.75 times the height of the container.
71. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 70, wherein said ribs project upwardly from the bottom portion at most about 0.6 times the height of the container.

72. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 70, wherein there are provided at least 2 upwardly projecting ribs which divide the container into at least 2 serving sections, one of which areas occupies at least about 60 percent of the bottom portion of the container.

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73. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 72, wherein there are provided 3 upwardly projecting ribs which divide the container into 3 serving sections, one of which areas occupies at least about 60 percent of the bottom portion of the container.

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74. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 69, wherein at least 2 serving sections are provided with predetermined portions of a printed image.

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75. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 74, wherein said printed image comprises character attributes.

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76. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 50, wherein said first and second tabs are printed with representations of character attributes selected from the group consisting of eyes, ears, fins, arms, paws, hands, hair, legs or feet.

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77. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 50, wherein the generally planar bottom portion is provided with embossments or debossments, at least one of which is provided with a printed image of a character attribute.

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78. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 77, wherein the generally planar bottom portion is provided with a debossment having printed thereon an image of an eye.

79. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 68, wherein said first and second tabs extend outwardly from the perimeter of the container a distance of from about 0.02 to about 0.3 times the diameter, **D**, of the container.

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80. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 79, wherein said first and second tabs extend outwardly from the perimeter of the container a distance of from about 0.1 to about 0.3 times the diameter, **D**, of the container.

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81. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 79, wherein said first and second tabs extend outwardly from the perimeter of the container a distance of from about 0.15 to about 0.25 times the diameter, **D**, of the container.

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82. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 50, wherein the outer flange portion of the container comprises an arcuate outer flange portion with a convex upper surface, the radius of curvature of the arcuate outer flange portion being between about 0.0175 and about 0.1 times the diameter, **D**, of the container.

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83. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 82, wherein the radius of curvature of the outer arcuate flange portion of the container is greater than about 0.025 times the diameter, **D**, of the container.

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84. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 83, wherein the radius of curvature of the outer arcuate flange portion of the container is from about 0.035 to about 0.07 times the diameter, **D**, of the container.

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85. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 82, wherein the convex upper surface of the arcuate outer flange portion is configured so that

it defines its radius of curvature over an included angle of from about 30° to about 80°.

86. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 85, wherein the  
5 convex upper surface of the arcuate outer flange portion is configured so that it defines its radius of curvature over an included angle of from about 50° to about 75°.
87. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 50, further  
10 characterized by a flange outer vertical drop wherein the ratio of the flange outer vertical drop to the characteristic diameter of the container is greater than about 0.01.
88. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 87, wherein the  
15 ratio of the flange outer vertical drop to the diameter, **D**, of the container is greater than about 0.013.
89. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 88, wherein the  
ratio of the flange outer vertical drop to the diameter, **D**, of the container is  
20 greater than about 0.015.
90. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 89, wherein the  
ratio of the flange outer vertical drop to the diameter, **D**, of the container is  
greater than about 0.0175.
- 25 91. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 68, wherein said first and second peripheral tabs have an arcuate outer edge.
92. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 91, wherein the  
30 outer edges of the first and second peripheral tabs have a radius of curvature of from about 0.01 to about 0.4 times the diameter, **D**, of the container.

93. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 92, wherein the outer edges of the first and second peripheral tabs have a radius of curvature of from about 0.05 to about 0.35 times the diameter, **D**, of the container.
- 5 94. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 93, wherein the outer edges of the first and second peripheral tabs have a radius of curvature of from about 0.1 to about 0.35 times the diameter, **D**, of the container.
- 10 95. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 94, wherein the peripheral tabs have a radius of curvature of from about 0.15 to about 0.35 times the diameter, **D**, of the container.
96. A disposable servingware container comprising:
  - 15 a generally planar bottom portion;
  - 20        a first annular transition portion extending upwardly and outwardly from the generally planar bottom portion;
  - 25        an optional sidewall portion extending upwardly and outwardly from the first annular transition portion;
  - 30        a second annular transition portion flaring outwardly with respect to the first annular transition portion;
  - 35        an outer flange portion extending outwardly with respect to the second annular transition; wherein the container is characterized by a container height, **H**;
  - 40        the outer flange portion being characterized by a vertical drop wherein the ratio of the flange outer vertical drop to the characteristic diameter of the

container is greater than about 0.01 such that the outer edge of the container terminates below the height,  $H$ , of the containers, generally at a brim height,  $H_b$ ; and

5            a generally planar peripheral tab extending outwardly from the flange portion of the container over a distance of at least about 0.02 times the characteristic diameter of the container at a height,  $H_T$ , below the height,  $H$ , of the container.

10        97. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 96, press-formed from a paperboard blank.

15        98. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 97, wherein said peripheral tab extends outwardly from the flange at a tab height,  $H_T$ , which is lower than the brim height,  $H_b$ .

20        99. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 98, wherein the peripheral tab extends outwardly from the flange a distance of from about 0.02 to about 0.3 times the characteristic diameter.

100. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 99, wherein the peripheral tab extends outwardly from the perimeter a distance of from about 0.1 to about 0.3 times the characteristic diameter of the container.

25        101. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 100, wherein the peripheral tab extends outwardly from the flange a distance of from about 0.15 to about 0.25 times the characteristic diameter of the container.

30        102. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 96, wherein the outer flange portion of the container comprises an arcuate outer flange portion with a convex upper surface, the radius of curvature of the arcuate

outer flange portion being between about 0.0175 and about 0.1 times the characteristic diameter of the container.

103. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 102, wherein the  
5 radius of curvature of the outer arcuate flange portion of the container is greater than about 0.025 times the diameter,  $D$ , of the container.

104. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 103, wherein the  
radius of curvature of the outer arcuate flange portion of the container is from  
10 about 0.035 to about 0.07 times the diameter,  $D$ , of the container.

105. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 104, wherein the  
convex upper surface of the arcuate outer flange portion is configured so that  
it defines its radius of curvature over an included angle of from about 30° to  
15 about 80°.

106. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 105, wherein the  
convex upper surface of the arcuate outer flange portion is configured so that  
it defines its radius of curvature over an included angle of from about 50° to  
20 about 75°.

107. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 96, wherein the  
ratio of the flange outer vertical drop to the diameter,  $D$ , of the container is  
greater than about 0.013.  
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108. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 96, wherein the  
ratio of the flange outer vertical drop to the diameter,  $D$ , of the container is  
greater than about 0.015.

109. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 108, wherein the ratio of the flange outer vertical drop to the diameter,  $D$ , of the container is greater than about 0.0175.

5 110. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 96, wherein the generally planar peripheral tab extends outwardly in a direction generally parallel to the generally planar bottom portion of the container.

10 111. A generally planar paperboard blank suitable for press-forming into a disposable pressware container comprising:  
a central portion defining generally a perimeter thereof having a characteristic diameter;

15 at least first and second peripheral tabs extending outwardly from the central portion beyond the perimeter of the central portion, the peripheral tabs being configured so as to define a cross-tab dimension between their outer edges generally parallel to and of like extent with a corresponding transverse dimension across the perimeter of the blank.

20 112. The paperboard blank according to Claim 111, the central portion having a circular shape defining a diameter,  $D'$  and wherein the cross-tab dimension defined by the first and second peripheral tabs is generally equal in length to diameter,  $D'$ .

25 113. The paperboard blank according to Claim 111, wherein said first and second peripheral tabs have an arcuate outer edge.

30 114. The paperboard blank according to Claim 113, wherein the outer edges of the first and second peripheral tabs have a radius of curvature of from about 0.01 to about 0.4 times the characteristic diameter of the paperboard blank.

115. The paperboard blank according to Claim 114, wherein the outer edges of the first and second peripheral tabs have a radius of curvature of from about 0.05 to about 0.35 times the characteristic diameter of the paperboard blank.
- 5 116. The paperboard blank according to Claim 114, wherein the outer edges of the first and second peripheral tabs have a radius of curvature of from about 0.1 to about 0.35 times the characteristic diameter of the paperboard blank.
- 10 117. The paperboard blank according to Claim 116, wherein the peripheral tabs have a radius of curvature of from about 0.15 to about 0.35 times the diameter,  $D'$ , of the paperboard blank.
- 15 118. The paperboard blank according to Claim 111, wherein said first and second peripheral tabs extend beyond the perimeter of the central portion of the paperboard blank a distance of from about 0.02 to about 0.3 times the characteristic diameter of the paperboard blank.
- 20 119. The paperboard blank according to Claim 118, wherein said first and second peripheral tabs extend beyond the perimeter of the central portion of the paperboard blank a distance of from about 0.1 to about 0.3 times the characteristic diameter of the central portion.
- 25 120. The paperboard blank according to Claim 111, wherein the blank is scored about its perimeter and the first and second peripheral tabs are unscored.
121. The paperboard blank according to Claim 111, having a caliper of at least about 10 mils.
- 30 122. The paperboard blank according to Claim 121, having a caliper of at least about 12 mils.

123. The paperboard blank according to Claim 122, having a caliper of at least about 15 mils and provided with a coating including a clay filler.
124. The paperboard blank according to Claim 122, having a caliper of from about 5 to about 25 mils.
125. The paperboard blank according to Claim 124, having a caliper of from about 12 to about 22.5 mils.
- 10 126. The paperboard blank according to Claim 111, provided with a printed image.
127. The paperboard blank according to Claim 126, wherein said printed image comprises character attributes which are facial features applied to the central 15 portion.
128. The paperboard blank according to Claim 126, wherein said printed image comprises character attributes selected from the group consisting of eyes, ears, fins, arms, paws, hands, hair, legs or feet applied to said first and second 20 tabs.
129. The paperboard blank according to Claim 111, wherein the first and second peripheral tabs define an angle therebetween less than about 150°.
- 25 130. The paperboard blank according to Claim 111, wherein the first and second peripheral tabs define an angle therebetween less than about 120°.
131. The paperboard blank according to Claim 111, wherein the first and second peripheral tabs define an angle therebetween of from about 70° to about 90°.

132. The paperboard blank according to Claim 111, further comprising third and fourth peripheral tabs extending outwardly from the central portion beyond the perimeter of the central portion, wherein the third and fourth peripheral tabs are configured so as to define a second cross-tab dimension between 5 their outer edges generally parallel to and of like extent with the corresponding transverse dimension across the perimeter of the blank.

133. The paperboard blank according to Claim 112, further comprising third and fourth peripheral tabs extending outwardly from the central portion beyond 10 the perimeter of the central portion, wherein the third and fourth peripheral tabs are configured so as to define a second cross-tab dimension between their outer edges generally parallel to and of like extent with the corresponding diameter,  $D'$ , across the perimeter of the blank.

15 134. A generally planar paperboard blank suitable for press-forming into a disposable pressware container comprising: /

20 a central portion defining generally a perimeter thereof having a characteristic diameter;

25 first and second peripheral tabs extending outwardly from the central portion beyond the perimeter of the central portion, the first and second peripheral tabs being configured so as to define a first cross-tab dimension between their outer edges generally parallel to and of greater length than a corresponding transverse dimension across the perimeter of the blank;

30 third and fourth peripheral tabs extending outwardly from the central portion beyond the perimeter of the central portion, the third and fourth peripheral tabs being configured so as to define a second cross-tab dimension between their outer edges generally parallel to and of greater length than the corresponding transverse dimension across the perimeter of the blank; and

wherein the first and second cross-tab dimensions are generally equal in length.

135. The paperboard blank according to Claim 134, wherein the central portion is  
5 circular and defines a diameter,  $D'$ , and wherein the first and second cross-tab dimensions are greater than the diameter,  $D'$ .

136. A method of press-forming a paperboard blank into a disposable servingware container comprising:

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(a) providing a generally planar paperboard blank which includes a central portion defining generally a perimeter thereof as well as at least a first and second peripheral tabs extending outwardly from the central portion beyond the perimeter of the central portion, the peripheral tabs being configured so as to define a first cross-tab dimension between their outer edges generally parallel to and of like extent with a corresponding transverse dimension across the paperboard blank perimeter;

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(b) transferring said paperboard blank to a die set while controlling its orientation utilizing said first and second peripheral tabs such that the paperboard blank is disposed in the die set in a predetermined orientation with respect thereto; and

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(c) press-forming said paperboard blank into a disposable container having a generally planar bottom portion; a first annular transition portion extending upwardly and outwardly from the generally planar bottom portion; an optional sidewall portion extending upwardly and outwardly from the first annular transition portion; a second annular transition portion flaring outwardly with respect to the first annular transition portion; an outer flange portion extending outwardly with respect to the second annular transition portion defining generally the container

perimeter; and at least first and second generally planar peripheral tabs corresponding to the tabs of the paperboard blank extending outwardly from the flange portion of the container generally beyond the container perimeter.

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137. The method according to Claim 136, wherein the peripheral tabs of the container are configured so as to define a cross-tab dimension between their outer edges generally parallel to and of like extent with a corresponding transverse dimension across the perimeter of the container.

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138. The method according to Claim 136, wherein the central portion of the paperboard blank is circular and defines a diameter,  $D'$ , and wherein the first cross-tab dimension defined by the first and second peripheral tabs is generally equal in length to the diameter,  $D'$ , of the central portion of the paperboard blank.

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139. The method according to Claim 136, wherein the paperboard blank further comprises third and fourth peripheral tabs extending outwardly from the central portion beyond the perimeter of the central portion wherein the third and fourth peripheral tabs are configured so as to define a second cross-tab dimension between their outer edges generally parallel to and of like extent with the corresponding transverse dimension across the perimeter of the blank.

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140. The method according to Claim 136, wherein the step of transferring the paperboard blank to die set includes guiding the paperboard blank with a pair of generally parallel opposed tracks.

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141. The method according to Claim 136, wherein said paperboard blank is provided with a printed image of predetermined position with respect to the peripheral tabs of the paperboard blank.

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142. The method according to Claim 141, wherein the step of forming the container comprises forming a plurality of ribs into the bottom portion of the container in predetermined correspondence with the printed image of the paperboard blank.

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143. The method according to Claim 141, wherein said image comprises character attributes which are facial features.

144. The method according to Claim 141, wherein said printed image comprises character attributes selected from the group consisting of eyes, ears, fins, arms, paws, hands, hair, legs or feet applied to said tabs.

145. The method according to Claim 141, wherein the step of forming the container comprises forming a plurality of embossments or debossments into the bottom portion of the container in predetermined correspondence with the printed image on the paperboard blank.

146. The method according to Claim 145, wherein the image comprises character attributes which are facial features.

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147. The method according to Claim 145, wherein the printed image comprises character attributes selected from the group consisting of feet, noses and eyes.

148. The method according to Claim 136, wherein said die set is a segmented die set.

149. The method according to Claim 148, wherein said die set includes a punch base member with a punch outer container contour portion, a punch knock-out mounted for reciprocating motion with respect to the punch base member and a pressure ring mounted for reciprocating motion with respect to the punch base member.

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150. The method according to Claim 149, wherein said die set includes a die base member with a die outer container contour portion, a die knock-out mounted for reciprocating motion with respect to the die base member and a draw ring mounted for reciprocating motion with respect to the die base member.

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151. The method according to Claim 150, wherein said paperboard blank contacts said draw ring and said pressure ring prior to contacting both the outer container contour portion of the punch base and the outer container contour portion of the die base.

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152. The method according to Claim 150, wherein said paperboard blank contacts the die knock-out and the punch knock-out prior to contacting both the punch base outer container contour portion and the outer container contour portion of the die base.

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153. The method according to Claim 150, wherein said die knock-out has a generally planar surface provided with a plurality of cantilevered rib male portions projecting therefrom.

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154. The method according to Claim 153, wherein said punch knock-out is provided with a generally planar surface having a plurality of female grooves therein corresponding to the male rib portions of the die knock-out adapted to cooperate therewith to form a plurality of ribs in the bottom portion of the disposable servingware container upon press-forming thereof from the paperboard blank.

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155. The method according to Claim 136, wherein the first and second generally planar peripheral tabs of the container extend outwardly in a direction generally parallel to the generally planar bottom portion of the formed container.

30

156. A disposable servingware container comprising:

a generally planar bottom portion;

5 a first annular transition portion extending upwardly and outwardly from the generally planar bottom portion;

an optional sidewall portion extending upwardly and outwardly from the first annular transition portion;

10 a second annular transition portion flaring outwardly with respect to the first annular transition portion;

15 an outer flange portion extending outwardly with respect to the second annular transition portion defining generally the container perimeter having a characteristic diameter; and

first and second generally planar peripheral tabs extending outwardly from the flange portion of the container generally beyond the container perimeter, the first and second peripheral tabs being configured so as to define a first cross-tab dimension between their outer edges generally parallel to and of greater length than with a corresponding transverse dimension across the perimeter of the container.

25 157. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 156, wherein the container perimeter is circular and defines a diameter, **D**, and the first cross-tab dimensions are of a length greater than **D**.

30 158. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 157, formed as a bowl having a height to diameter ratio of at least 0.15.

159. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 158, formed as a bowl having a height to diameter ratio of from about 0.175 to about 0.3.
160. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 156, wherein the 5 first and second peripheral tabs extend outwardly in a direction generally parallel to the generally parallel bottom portion of the container.
161. A disposable servingware container comprising:
  - 10 a generally planar bottom portion;
  - a first annular transition portion extending upwardly and outwardly from the generally planar bottom portion;
  - 15 an optional sidewall portion extending upwardly and outwardly from the first annular transition portion;
  - a second annular transition portion flaring outwardly with respect to the first annular transition portion;
  - 20 an outer flange portion extending outwardly with respect to the second annular transition portion defining generally the container perimeter having a characteristic diameter;
  - 25 first and second generally planar peripheral tabs extending outwardly from the flange portion of the container generally beyond the container perimeter, the first and second peripheral tabs being configured so as to define a first cross-tab dimension between their outer edges generally parallel to and of greater length than with a corresponding transverse dimension across the perimeter of the container; and
  - 30

third and fourth generally planar peripheral tabs extending outwardly from the flange portion of the container generally beyond the container perimeter, the third and fourth peripheral tabs being configured so as to define a second cross-tab dimension between their outer edges generally parallel to and of greater length than with a corresponding transverse dimension across the perimeter of the container.

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162. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 161, wherein the first, second, third and fourth peripheral tabs extend outwardly in a direction generally parallel with the generally planar bottom portion of the container.

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163. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 161, wherein the container perimeter is circular and defines a diameter,  $D$ , and the first and second cross-tab dimensions are generally equal in length and of a length greater than  $D$ .

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164. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 163, formed as a bowl having a height to diameter ratio of at least 0.15.

20 165. The disposable servingware container according to Claim 164, formed as a bowl having a height to diameter ratio from about 0.175 to about 0.3.

166. A method of making a disposable servingware container comprising:

25 (a) preparing a paperboard blank with a circular perimeter of diameter,  $D'$ , and first and second lobular tabs extending outwardly from the perimeter of diameter,  $D'$ , of the paperboard blank;

30 (b) press-forming the paperboard blank into a disposable container having a generally planar bottom portion, a first annular transition portion adjacent thereto, an optional sidewall portion, a second annular

transition portion flaring outwardly with respect to the first annular transition portion and an outer flange extending outwardly from the second annular transition portion to define the container diameter,  $D$ , which is less than  $D'$ , wherein the disposable container has a height to diameter ratio of greater than about 0.1;

5

and wherein further the lobular tabs extend outwardly from the bowl perimeter of diameter,  $D$ , a distance of from about 0.02 to about 0.3 times the bowl diameter,  $D$ .

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167. The method according to Claim 166, wherein the container has a height to diameter ratio of greater than about 0.125.

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168. The method according to claim 168, wherein the container has a height to diameter ratio of greater than about 0.15.

169. The method according to Claim 168, wherein the container has a height to diameter ratio of from about 0.175 to about 0.3.

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170. The method according to Claim 169, wherein the container has a height to diameter ratio of from about 0.2 to about 0.275.

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171. The method according to Claim 166, wherein the lobular tabs extend outwardly from the container perimeter a distance of from about 0.1 to about 0.3 times the container diameter,  $D$ .

30

172. The method according to Claim 171, wherein the lobular tabs extend outwardly from the container perimeter a distance of from about 0.15 to about 0.25 times the container diameter,  $D$ .

173. The method according to Claim 166, wherein said paperboard blank is provided with a printed image of predetermined position with respect to the lobular tabs of the paperboard blank.
- 5 174. The method according to Claim 173, wherein said image comprises character attributes which are facial features.
- 10 175. The method according to Claim 173, wherein said printed image comprises character attributes selected from the group consisting of eyes, ears, fins, arms, paws, hands, hair, legs or feet applied to said tabs.
- 15 176. The method according to Claim 173, wherein the step of forming the container comprises forming a plurality of embossments or debossments into the bottom portion of the container in predetermined correspondence with the printed image on the paperboard blank.
- 20 177. The method according to Claim 173, wherein the image comprises character attributes which are facial features.
- 25 178. The method according to Claim 173, wherein the printed image comprises character attributes selected from the group consisting of feet, noses and eyes.
179. The method according to Claim 178, wherein the image comprises eyes.
- 25 180. The method according to Claim 173, wherein the lobular tabs of the paperboard blank are printed with images of ears.
181. The method according to Claim 166, wherein the paperboard blank has at least about 40 radially extending scores spread around its perimeter.

182. The method according to Claim 181, wherein the paperboard blank has at least about 60 radially extending scores spread around its perimeter.
183. The method according to Claim 166, wherein the first and second lobular tabs 5 define an included angle therebetween less than about 150°.
184. The method according to Claim 166, wherein the first and second lobular tabs define an included angle therebetween less than about 120°.
- 10 185. The method according to Claim 166, wherein the first and second lobular tabs define an included angle therebetween of from about 70° to about 90°.
186. The method according to Claim 166, wherein the lobular tabs extend outwardly in a direction generally parallel with the generally planar bottom 15 portion of the container.
187. The method according to Claim 166, wherein the tabs are generally planar.
188. The method according to Claim 187, wherein the planar tabs have an image 20 printed thereon.